

REMARKS

The title has been amended as requested.

In addition, claim 1 has been amended to include the subject matter of claim 2 and to further define that the fixing unit (123) is a bolt that is disposed movably and rotatably in the first housing (11) and that extends into the sleeve unit (124), and that the length of the sleeve unit (124) that protrudes out from the first housing (11) is less than or equal to the length of the first engaging portion (12) that protrudes out of the first housing (11). When the sleeve units (124) of the first electrical connector (1) are sleeved on the respective positioning members (211), in the form of hexagonal nuts, of the second electrical connector (2), the first and second electrical connectors (1, 2) are fitted together. Furthermore, relative movement between the first and second electrical connectors in a transverse direction of the contact pins (122) is prevented. Even if the fixing units (123) and the positioning members (211) are not inter-engaged, the connection between the first and second electrical connectors can be stabilized.

Claim 2 has been cancelled, and claims 3 and 5 amended to depend from claim 1. In addition, claim 6 has been rewritten in independent form.

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-3 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) for being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,554,635 to Ayers et al. (hereafter Ayers).

In Ayers, the connector 204, 306 of the interface adapter 202, 304 is configured so that it does not extend beyond the distal end of alignment member(s) 212, 320, 322 of the interface adapter 202, 304. Engagement between the alignment member(s) 212, 320, 322 and a protrusion of a computing device 104, 404 guides the connectors 204, 306 to interconnect. In other words, the alignment member(s) 212, 320, 322 are longer than the connector 204, 306.

In contrast, the claimed sleeve unit (124) that protrudes out from the first housing is "less than or equal to" the length of the first engaging portion (12). The purpose of this difference in structure is to prevent relative movement between the first and second electrical connectors (1, 2) in the transverse direction of the contact pins (122) when the electrical connectors are interconnected, not to guide the interconnection of the two electrical connectors. That is why the sleeve unit (124) of the present electrical connector assembly is different than the alignment members 212, 320, 322 of the electrical connector of Ayers.

Accordingly, it is not believed that the electrical connector assembly of amended claim 1 or claims 3-5 dependent therefrom is anticipated by Ayers. Its withdrawal as a ground of rejection of the claims under §102 is therefore requested.

In view of the amendment of claim 6, it is believed this claim is now also allowable.

It is believed claims 1 and 3-6 are in condition for allowance.

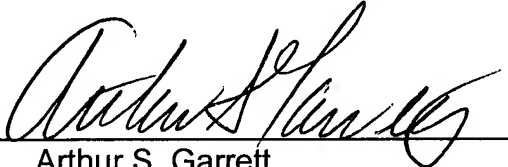
In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and reexamination of this application and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our deposit account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

FINNEGAN, HENDERSON, FARABOW,
GARRETT & DUNNER, L.L.P.

Dated: March 7, 2005

By: 
Arthur S. Garrett
Reg. No. 20,338

864186_1